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FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Ludwig ERHARD

Former Federal Chancellor

Professor Ludwig Erhard (72), whose chief contribution to postwar Germany was the plan for currency reform which led to the German economic miracle, served from 1963 to 1966 as West Germany's second Chancellor. He was Minister of Economics from 1949 to 1963 and has been a Bundestag deputy since 1949. Erhard has been called the most apolitical German leader of the century. Never deeply involved in the internal affairs of his party, the CDU, he preferred to think of himself as a people's Chancellor, above narrow partisan politics. He became Chancellor over the bitter opposition of his predecessor, Konrad Adenauer, and was widely criticized for his lack of forcefulness and for allegedly lacking strong qualities of leadership, to the extent of being called a "rubber lion." He lost the chancellorship after a budget dispute caused the collapse of his cabinet. Strongly pro-American, he acknowledged the primacy of American leadership in the Atlantic Alliance. An extrovert and optimist by nature, Erhard is an inveterate cigar smoker, drinks liberally, and enjoys classical music. His wife and married daughter are both economists. Erhard is a Protestant. He speaks some English but prefers to use German in official discussions.

CSB:ae

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